MINUTES

OF THE

EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

TUSCALOOSA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD AT

FRIENDSHIP MEETING-HOUSE

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY, ALA.,

FROM 14TH TO 17TH SEPTEMBER,

1850.

TUSCALOOSA:
PRINTED BY M. D. J. SLADE.
1850.

MINUTES.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1849.

1. The delegates from the churches, visiting ministers, and a large number of brethren and friends, met at Friendship meeting-house, Tuskaloosa county. The Introductory discourse was delivered by brother Robert S. Adams, from Mal. 3. 16.

2. After preaching, the delegates assembled at the meeting-house, and on motion, brother Adams was called to preside, until the election of a Moderator.

3. The Association was opened with prayer, by bro. H. G. Smith.

4. Elected bro. R. DODSON, Moderator, and M. D. J. SLADE, Clerk.

5. Messengers from other Associations, and visiting ministers, were invited to seats.

6. Correspondence from sister Associations was called for; when a letter and minutes, by bro. Jesse Thomas, were received from the Union Association; and by bro. H. G. Smith, from the Canaan. The Messengers were cordially welcomed.

7. The letters from the churches were then presented, and by resolution of last year, referred to the committee on Documents.

8. The standing committees were appointed, viz:

On Preaching—Camp, John Brown, Middleton, Hester, and the deacons of Friendship Church.

On the order of Business—Adams, Burns, VanHoose, Moderator and Clerk.

On Documents—VanHoose, John Thomas, and S. W. Eddins.

On Finance—Bell, B. S. Thompson, B. Eddins, and Quarles.

On the Circular Letter—Sudduth, Melton, and Slaughter.

9. Invitation was given for the admission of New Churches; when bro. J. P. Thompson presented a letter from Mount Zion Baptist Church, Tuskaloosa county, petitioning to join this Association, which was granted, by a unanimous vote; and the right hand of fellowship given to her delegates by the moderator. Mt. Zion is added to the first district.

10. The committee on Preaching reported—prayer meeting at the stand Sabbath morning, at 9 o'clock; after which, bro. Chambliss to preach. A short intermission, and bro. Manly, sen. to preach the Missionary Sermon, under appointment at last association; bro. VanHoose to conclude. Bro. Jesse Thomas to preach at candle-light.

11. After prayer, adjourned to Monday morning, 9 o'clock.

The stand was occupied on Sunday by brothers Chambliss and Manly, who preached able and edifying discourses to a very large and attentive congregation.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER, 16.

12. The Association met—prayer by bro. J. P. Thompson.

13. The Articles of Faith, Constitution, and Rules of Decorum, were read.

14. The Roll was called, and absentees noted.

15. The committee to arrange business, reported; which was concurred in, and the committee discharged.

16. Correspondence returned:

To the *Mulberry* Association, by messengers Oswald and Camp; Adams to write.

To the *Cahawba*, Hester and Eddins; VanHoose to write.

To the *Union*, VanHoose, Adams and Dodson; bro. N. Brown to write.

To the *Columbus*, Manly and Dodson; Slade to write.

To the *Canaan*, J. P. Thompson, N. Brown, Burns and Arnold; John Thomas to write.

17. DISTRICT MEETINGS.

First District.—With Sardis church, on Friday before 1st Sabbath in Sept. 1851; bro. Burns to preach the introductory sermon, bro. Arnold alternate. Bro. Manly, sen., is earnestly requested to preach a missionary sermon on Sabbath, bro. Dodson alternate.

Second District.—With Big Creek church, on Friday before 2d Sabbath in Sept. 1851; the introductory sermon by bro. Dodson, bro. Thompson alternate.

Third District.—With Chapel Hill church, on 4th Sabbath in August, 1851; the introductory sermon by bro. VanHoose, bro. Dodson alternate.

Fourth District.—With Bethany church, on Friday before 1st Sabbath in Sept. 1851; bro. R. S. Adams to preach the introductory, bro. Jesse Thomas, alternate.

18. NEXT ASSOCIATION.

To be held at Little Sandy meeting-house, 7 miles south of Tuskaloosa, on the Greensborough road, Saturday before 3rd Sunday in Sept. 1851.

19. Bros. Fox, S. W. Eddins and B. S. Thompson, were appointed a committee to nominate preachers of the next annual and missionary sermons, the writer of the circular, and delegates to the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

20. The report of the committee on documents was read, the committee discharged, and the report taken up. The first branch of which, was, the application of Macedonia Church, Bibb county, to withdraw from this association to join the Mulberry. The application was granted.

The Chapel Hill church having stated in their letter to the Association, that it has some difficulties among them in regard to the action of the last Association, in the matter of the North River Association; the following resolution was recommended to be, and was adopted.

Resolved, That this Association are not aware that any action of this body can place the matter in a more favorable light.

A letter from Salem church to the committee on Documents, asked to bring to the notice of the Association, the lack of ministerial support by the churches, and various sections of the country destitute of the ministry. After the letter was read, interesting remarks were made by bros. Chambliss and Manly, and it was referred to a select committee of bros. John Thomas, John Brown and B. S. Thompson.

The committee recommended to the consideration of the Association, the peculiar claims and wants of the 4th district, which had but one minister in its bounds, and the consequent deficient supply to the churches. The subject was referred to the committee on Destitution.

The committee on Documents further report for the favorable consideration of the Association, a circular from the President of the Alabama Baptist Convention, in behalf of Ministerial Education, and aid therefor. The circular was read, a subscription opened, and whilst brethren were contributing, bro. VanHoose earnestly advocated the claim of this cause on the benevolence of the denomination. $42 55 were paid to the clerk to be transmitted to the Treasurer of the Board, at Marion, on or before the 1st of November, 1850.

21. The Circular Letter was read, and was ordered to be printed with these minutes.

22. After singing, prayer was offered by bro. Chambliss; and the Association adjourned to 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Tuesday, September 17.

23. The Association met. Prayer by bro. Manly.

24. The committee on nominations reported, which was confirmed, viz: Bro. Burns to preach the next introdnctory sermon, bro. Walters alternate. Bro. VanHoose to preach the missionary sermon, bro. B. Manly, jr., alternate. Bro. Adams to write the circular. The following are the delegates to the Alabama Baptist State Convention: N. H. Brown, James Clements, A. VanHoose, W. Hester, W. Burns, E. Prince, P. Shuttlesworth, R. Dodson, M. D. J. Slade and B. F. Eddins.

25. The select committee on the letter from Salem church, reported the following, which was adopted:

The committee to whom was referred the communication from the Salem church, report, that the destitution of adequate ministerial help within the limits of this body, as the communication states, is indeed deplorable. For 34 churches, there appear to be about 15 ordained ministers, and a small

number of licentiates. The far larger part of the ministers are past middle life; with large families, and *very slender* means of support; some of them nothing beyond the daily labor of their hands. When it is considered that the supply of the churches with even the little preaching they have, costs these ministers *not less* than one-third part of their working time, the small amount of help toward their support which is rendered by the churches, makes a painful impression of *neglect*. It is manifest that this system tends, in various ways, directly and continually, to depress the ministry, both in numbers and efficiency. What is to be the result on the condition and prospects of the churches themselves, a very small experience of life is sufficient to determine.

Contemplating this result, with the painful conviction that the churches, as a body, are in the habitual neglect of a scriptural duty, indispensable to their welfare, the committee suggest,

1. That the Association call the attention of the churches to this most important subject, and urge on them, severally, to take regular and efficient means for discharging the plain rule of God's word, on that subject,—"Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."—Gal. 6. 6.

2. That, in accordance with the suggestion of the Salem church, the Association set apart a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, and recommend its observance by each of the churches; and that each church be urged to take appropriate means, on that day, to ascertain and consider its duty in this particular; and to pray the Lord of the Harvest, that he will send forth more Laborers into his Harvest.

26. The Report of the committee on Destitution was read, and adopted. The clerk was instructed to put it into a digested form, and attach it to these minutes; and to forward the entire report to the "South Western Baptist," for publication in that paper.

27. The letters of correspondence to sister Associations were read, signed and handed to the messengers. [*Note.*—That to the Union was not sent, as the messengers appointed found it inconvenient to go, and no opportunity to send it.]

28. The Association voted to request of bro. Manly a copy of the Missionary Sermon delivered by him on Sabbath; and that bro. Slade be requested to print the same in pamphlet form.

29. The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the Constitution of this Association be so altered that the 13th article thereof read as follows:

"Any church in our Union having a member whom she deems worthy of license, ordination, or restoration to the functions of the ministry, shall call a presbytery of ministers from sister churches to officiate in the work; and

all presbyteries in the ordaining of ministers or deacons, or in the constituting of churches, shall be governed by the Abstract of Faith adopted by this Association."

The 13th article, amended as above, was then adopted by the constitutional requisition.

30. Bro. VanHoose offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Association, the "South Western Baptist," published at Marion, Ala., is a paper worthy of our patronage; and that, as it is now considered the organ of our denomination in this state, we feel that it is peculiarly our duty and interest to sustain it.

31. The following resolution was adopted:

Bro. J. P. Thompson stated, that in the number of members included in the constitution of the Mt. Zion church, there was a portion who were baptized by him with the concurrence of brethren holding letters of dismission, but without the concurrence of any church; that he considered the circumstances justified this procedure in that instance; but wishes that this may not be drawn into a precedent that may hereafter be acted on.

Wherefore, resolved, That this Association have heard this voluntary statement with satisfaction; and, while we do not undertake to decide whether the circumstances in this case justified the action that was taken, the opinion is very decidedly entertained by this body, that such a course of procedure would be irregular and unsafe, when it is possible to have access to churches of our order who may act in such a case.

32. It was voted that the committee on Destitution hereafter, consist of seven members—one from each district, and three other persons. Whereupon, it was further voted, that the moderator be appointed for the third district, and that the six others be appointed by him. The committee for the current year are, 1st. District, P. Shuttlesworth; 2d. S. W. Eddins; 3d. R. Dodson; 4th. P. Sudduth, and B. Manly, A. VanHoose and M. D. J. Slade. [The committee are requested to meet at the lecture room of the Baptist Church in Tuskaloosa, at 10 o'clock, A. M., on Tuesday, 12th of November, 1850.]

33. It was voted, that of the fund sent up for the use of the Association, the committee on Finance be instructed to pay the clerk $15 for his services, and that the remainder of that fund be divided at the rate of $1 10 per day to the messengers to other Associations, if the fund will allow that sum to each.

34. The committee on Finanee reported as follows:

Contributed for Minutes,	$52 50	Paid for Minutes,	$52 50
" " Association,	42 45	" to Clerk,	15 00
		" bro. Jesse Thomas, (mess.)	4 40
	$94 95	" " Burns, "	6 60
		" " Arnold, "	5 50
		" " Pugh, "	4 40
		" " Manly, jr., "	6 60
			$95 00

The committee on Finance further reported, the funds received for various objects. [See Report on Destitution.]

25. The committee on Destitution were requested to have the Cards distributed for the present year.

36. The distribution of the minutes was entrusted to the Clerk.

37. The following explanation was directed to be recorded:

Bro. P. Sudduth stated, that a mistake appears (Art. 15, page 5 of last year's minutes) in a report respecting Mt. Zion church, arising no doubt from inadvertence. The true state of the facts seems to be this—that the brethren of Mt. Zion church did refuse to be labored with on the second day of the committee's visiting that church; but this is understood to have proceeded from some objection to the committee's coming, through mistake, at a time not appointed. It ought also to be stated that the Mt. Zion church did give the committee, on the last day of meeting, a copy of their declaration of non-fellowship with the Tuskaloosa Association.

38. Having gone through the business, bro. Moderator addressed the members of the body, in appropriate remarks, prayer was offered by bro. Chambliss, a hymn sung, and the brethren gave each other the farewell hand.

REUBEN DODSON, Moderator.

M. D. J. SLADE, Clerk.

	CHURCHES.	COUNTIES.	Names of Ordained Ministers in SMALL CAPITALS. Licentiates in *italics*. Absentees † DELEGATES.	Baptised	Rec'd by L.	Restored.	Dismiss'd	Excluded	Dead.	White members.	Colored members.	Total in Fellows'p	Date of Constit'n	Minutes.	Fund for Assoc'n.	Fund for Assoc'n.	Sab'th M
1st DISTRICT.	Mt. Moriah.....	Bibb,	P. Shuttlesworth, WILLIS BURNS, M. Moses,†	7	11	1	9	3	..	135	33	168	1826	3 00	2 00	4	
	Cedar Grove....	do	Hiram White,* John Rolin, Peter M. Cobb, ...	4	5	...	.....	..	..	30	.....	30	1837	1 00	1 00	2	
	Union	do	Henry Brown,† William Parmer, Larkin B. Lawless,†.....	.....	.....	...	.....	..	..	16	.....	16	1845	75		55	4
	Haysop	do	BENJAMIN OSWALD, John R. Fulgham,† Jackson Creel,...	.....	2	2	.....	3	1	66	11	77	1830	1 75	1 25	2	
	Shultz' Creek...	do	Joel Lowry,† James Camp, John Lowry, sen.†,.....	1	1	...	2	4	..	45	.....	45	1830	1 00	1 00	4	
	Macedonia	do	F. Creel, I. H. Hagler,† William Creel,.....	.....	4	...	2	..	..	38	.....	38		1 00		50	1
	Siloam.....	Tuscaloosa,	Ephraim McLean, L. BOYDSTON,† N. D. D. Vernon,†	.....	3	...	13	5	2	40	.....	40	1844	1 00	1 00	3	
	Liberty	do	Vincent King,† W. B. Young,† S. C. Brown,†.....	.....	.....	...	1	1	..	30	2	32	1835	75		50	2
	Big Hurricane	do	*E. Mitchell*, L. Pumphrey, William Ray,.....	5	8	1	2	3	..	87	2	89	1839	1 50	1 00	3	
	Hephzibah	do	I. R. ARNOLD. *W. H. Carroll*, James Ray, ...	19	4	...	24	3	1	109	.....	109	1847	2 00	2 00	1	
	Mt. Zion	do	J. P. THOMPSON, Caleb Jennings, O. J. Hall,.....	7	30	...	.....	..	..	37	.....	37	1850	2 00		50	4
2d DISTRICT.	Sardis	do	Seth Bowen, John H. Ward, G. B. Walker,†.....	.....	2	...	19	2	1	47	21	68	1819	1 00	1 00	1	
	Gilgal	do	Samuel W. Eddins, C. A. Hester, Samuel A. Hamner,†	1	.....	1	12	1	..	44	23	67	1828	2 00	2 00	2	
	South Sandy ...	do	Samuel Tubb,† A. Howard,† H. H. Johnson,†	.....	.....	...	3	3	..	47	5	52	1843	1 00	1 00	4	
	Little Sandy ...	do	H. B. Rogers, S. W. Quarles, J. W. Hinton,.....	8	9	...	10	3	1	90	26	116	1836	2 00	2 00	3	
	Hopewell	do	R. JONES, B. S. Thompson, N. H. Brown, ...	11	4	...	8	1	..	88	10	98	1830	2 00	1 50	4	
	Tuscaloosa.....	do	A. VANHOOSE, Benjamin Eddins, M. D. J. Slade,.....	15	22	1	5	3	1	86	107	193	1818	4 00	2 00	2	
	Northport	do	R. H. Poe, B. Burks,† J. S. Reynolds, ...	14	18	...	3	2	1	36	.....	36	1839	1 50	1 00	2	
	Big Creek	do	John W. Bealle, Hiram Skelton, Henry Hyche,†.....	7	1	...	5	5	...	197	27	224	1820	2 00	3 00	2	
3d DISTRICT.	Ruhamah	do	D. Riley, J. T. Green,† R. Pounds, ...	.....	2	...	1	1	...	23	1	24	1844	75	75	2	
	Bethel	do	Freeman Logan, James W. Stamps,† William Stoker, ...	.....	.....	...	.....	..	2	25	6	31	1817	88	87	1	
	Chapel Hill.....	do	James M. Sartin, N. Lloyd, John Brown, ...	1	2	...	2	..	..	37	3	40	1839	1 00	50	3	
	Mt. Tabor	do	T Watson, W. W. Robertson,† J F. Ward,.....	.....	.....	...	7	2	..	27	3	30	1822	50	75	3	
	Philadelphia ...	do	R. DODSON, R. S. ADAMS, G. W. Hassell, ...	20	.....	1	7	1	1	67	21	88	1824	2 00	2 00	4	
	Salem	do	John Thomas, Ezekiel Slaughter, Isaac Willingham, ...	6	1	...	4	1	..	100	2	102	1824	2 00	2 00	2	
	New Hope	do	Edmund Gilchrist, T. Simpson,† W. Simpson,†	.....	4	...	.....	..	..	11	.....	11	1839	75		75	3
	Friendship	do	Jonathan Hardin, A. D. Carraway, *James Harrald*, ...	1	3	...	16	14	..	47	3	50	1825	1 00	1 00	1	
	Bethabara	do	B. F. Landreth,† C. Montgomery, A. A. Dunavant,.....	1	3	...	2	13	..	30	1	31	1843	1 00	1 00	4	
4TH DISTRICT.	Concord	Fayette,	A. F. Bell, Thomas Davis, Elihu Melton, ...	.....	1	...	.....	3	...	38	.....	38	1839	1 00	1 00	3	
	Bethany	Tuscaloosa.	John Wheat, Joel Hancock, Samuel Mayfield, ...	.....	5	..	2	..	1	36	7	43	1832	1 00	1 00	3	
	Dunn's Creek...	do	WILLIAM PUGH, Obediah Mayfield, Aaron Shirley,†.....	3	2	...	2	..	2	64	6	70	1834	1 50	1 30	2	
	Spring Hill.....	do	P. Sudduth, Bradly Nall, William T. Poe,.....	.....	1	3	16	7	1	76	18	94	1827	1 50	2 00	1	
	Hebron	do	Daniel Springer, James Crossland, Job Springer, ...	4	1	...	4	..	...	23	1	24	1839	1 25	1 00	1	
	Mt. Tabor	Pickens,	Jacob Fox, David Stokes, Dudley Prewett, ...	1	3	...	5	1	2	71	7	78	1848	1 50	1 50	4	
	Mt. Lebanon ...	Fayette,	Fletcher Smith, James Middleton, Robert McMinn, ...	1	9	1	6	1	1	32	1	33	1842	1 50	1 00	4	
				130	160	10	173	18	18	1971	358	2329			42 50		

CIRCULAR.

THE TUSKALOOSA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION TO THE CHURCHES THEY REPRESENT,—GREETING.

A few thoughts on the general subject of *fellowship*, may not be unseasonable or useless.

The word translated "fellowship" in the New Testament, is used of a common enjoyment of one thing, 2 Cor. 6.14; and, being derived from a word signifying *common*, it means *participation*,—hence, *communion*. Its first use in the New Testament is with relation to the community of goods and possessions, in that first church at Jerusalem. Acts 2.42–45. They possessed all things in common. Hence it is applied to express a possession, mutually, between God and his people; i. e., he is theirs for their salvation, and they are his for his service; and this mutual possession is asserted of each of the persons in the sacred Trinity. 1 John 1.3; 1 Cor. 1.9; 2 Cor. 13.14, and Phil. 2.1. On a similar principle, Christians are said to have a fellowship of Christ's sufferings, Phil. 3.10. The same word is used also, to express the common participation of believers in Christian graces and affections, Phil. 1.5;—a participation in dispensing the contributions of Christian benevolence, Rom. 15.26, 2 Cor. 8.4, Gal. 6.6, Phil. 4.14, Heb. 13.16;—and a participation, or *communion*, in the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. 10.16. This is the only passage, in the New Testament, in which this word is used with relation to that ordinance.

In Gal. 2.9, mention is made of giving "the right hand of fellowship,'—in reference to a transaction of which the record is contained in Acts 15. This was the pledge and token of society and fellow-feeling, of common privileges and enjoyments. This, taken in connexion with the use of the word as respects the Lord's supper, leads us, at once, to see the distinction between fellowship and the tokens or symbols of it,—and between Christian fellowship in general, and church fellowship in particular.

Christian fellowship arises from a participation, by two or more, of the spirit and grace of Christ; and is formed between individuals when the evidence of such a state of mind is obtained. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have *fellowship one with another*." 1 John 1.7. It is of the same general nature as that which is said to subsist in regard to God 1 John 1.3, 6,—or the saints in glory, Heb. 12.23, Eph. 3.15. It is a spiritual thing, not visible; and needs not invariably any specific outward act, to betoken or symbolize it. It may be symbolized by "the right hand," the "cup of cold water," the "kiss of charity;" or by an engagement in prayer, or any other solemn act of religious duty. These but dimly show parts of the great spiritual reality;—the whole which is included in Christian fellowship cannot be set forth, or comprehended, until we "sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Mat. 8.11. This is a feeling that should be cultivated and exercised by, and toward, all that "love our Lord Jesus Christ,"—whether in the same church relations, or not. All that are spiritually united to Christ, though they may not belong to any visible church, belong to Christ's mystical body,—they are of "the general assembly and church of the first born," Heb. 12.23, "the whole family in heaven and earth," Eph. 3.15; and are all included within the expansive scope of this uniting principle. It is evident that this may, and does, exist, independent of the interchange of outward tokens of fellowship. To refer to an example before our eyes, as Baptists;—we form this spiritual Christian fellowship with a person before he is admitted to any ordinance, or receives any external token of fellowship. Even baptism, which is properly *before* individual membership in a church, does not *introduce* the subject to our Christian fellowship,—because it does not *confer* nor *ascertain* Christian character. It is evident, also, that this fellowship may exist amid a great variety of external profession and circumstances.

Church fellowship, on the other hand, is more definite and limited; and requires such

closer union of views and feelings, beside an actual or presumed Christian fellowship, as may enable the parties to live together in a special separate organization. The church is, emphatically, Jesus Christ's *own* society. To its guardianship, primarily,—rather than to that of Conventions, Presbyteries, Conferences or Associations—has he committed the great responsibility of keeping "the ordinances as they were delivered;" here has he lodged the power which operates in the world for the conversion and salvation of men:—Conventions and societies, under whatever other organization, may concentrate and direct—they can neither originate nor maintain it.

Absolute unanimity may not be possible, even here; but a much nearer approach to it is desirable and requisite, than that which is sufficient for Christian fellowship,—especially as regards things pertaining to the order of Christ's visible kingdom. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3.3. Of course, men united in the same church retain their individuality; and, as to points not involved in the fact of that relation, must be left to follow individual tastes and preferences, like other persons. To enumerate and define these points of special agreement for church fellowship is the legitimate object of covenants, creeds, and confessions of faith; and the very statement of the object shows their utility. Whatever does not infringe these, provided also that it does not offend God or violate Christian fellowship, is fairly within the range of Christian liberty. Such are the concerns of private life, habits of social intercourse, intimacies (the Savior had his), alliances and efforts in any connexions for good objects; &c. To abridge the freedom of church members in such respects, so far from being allowed by church fellowship, is a spiritual tyranny,—it is to "put a yoke on the neck of the disciples;" and should be resisted. Acts 15.10.

The Lord's supper is an ordinance *within*, and *for*, the church, as a particular separate organization. Whenever its celebration is described, we find one church, in "one place." 1 Cor. 11.20, 21, 33, &c. And these, with other facts, lead to the conclusion that the "breaking of bread" and the "cup of blessing" are, specially, the symbols of *church* fellowship. Mutual participation in these symbols goes no further, *necessarily*, than to acknowledge that the parties are, *or might be*, members together of the same separate church. The representatives of churches, or other incidental assemblages of Christians, participate on this principle;—but some particular church is celebrating the ordinance, and these are invited, by courtesy; as being of a description which might unite in that special organization, if contiguous residence or other circumstances favored. But this is an arrangement entirely voluntary and prudential;—not obligatory, or as of right, in either party.

Those united in the bonds of church fellowship, certainly, *ought* to have Christian fellowship with each other. 1 Cor. 16.16 The fact of their church union recognizes them as fellow-worshippers of the same Lord. But participation in the symbols of church fellowship goes no further than to recognize them, though many, as members of *one* worshipping fraternity; even as they "are all partakers of that one bread" (*loaf*) 1 Cor. 10.17.

The use of those tokens does not, necessarily or always, express *actual Christian* fellowship, or personal confidence in the Christian character and piety of all the partakers; no more than joining in the deliberations of a church-meeting, or any other token or act of church relation. These tokens may, and do, of right, exist in some cases where there is not that actual spiritual fellowship. Christ exchanged tokens of church relationship with Judas; yet there never was any spiritual fellowship between them. Of course, there is nothing in this to sanction our partaking in the supper with an *openly* and *notoriously* improper person. Such should be excluded from the church,—consequently from the Lord's table:—"with such a one, no—not to eat." 1 Cor. 5.11.

But this symbolic festival is not, as some appear to hold, the special or appointed sign for recognizing men as Christians. Those with whom we partake do not form the limits of our Christian fellowship. When Christ instituted the supper, the "*seventy* disciples" were not there; nor even his own mother, the blessed virgin. And we no more intend to express our belief in the real individual piety of our fellow-partakers, in that ordinance, than in any other deliberate church act.*

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* The reader will find this class of views ably and fully expounded in "Curtis on Communion,"—a work which *thoughtful* and candid persons, of every name, may *study* with profit and pleasure.—B. M.

The refusal, to partake together in the Lord's supper, of parties who might conveniently commune, does not, of itself, express the want of Christian fellowship; but only that they are not prepared to unite together as members of the same visible church. A few years ago, the offer to commune in the supper by one of the bodies into which the Presbyterian Church is divided (both sitting in Philadelphia), was declined by the other; yet this latter body did not thereby intend to deny the claim of the former to be regarded as Christians. Nor is a similar refusal, in any other case, to be construed into such denial,—without express authority from the recusants themselves.

If these views be just, we conclude,

1. That nothing is gained to the cause of Christ and of Christian charity by attempting to break down the separate organization and peculiar attachments of particular churches. On the same principle that a man, warmly attached to his family, may be a fast friend, a man of the kindest benevolence and firmest patriotism, may you expect a member attached to his own individual church to be a firm friend of the general cause of Christ—"a lover of good men." The one is the foundation of the other, and auxiliary to it;—just as the family is the primal form of organization. and indispensable to the state. The Passover was eaten by each single family, apart,—or by others in addition, only on special invitation and agreement; but this did not hinder the inmates of those families from forming and maturing the temper of "the Israelite indeed, in whom there is" neither bigotry nor "*guile*." To maintain denominational peculiarities so as to recognize nothing truly valuable beyond our party, and contrary to the Christian fellowship due to Christ's spiritual and universal family, is a violation of the charity of the gospel; and must tend, eminently, to unfit a person for the society of "the spirits of just men made perfect." Those, who most deny true piety in other communions, have the least of it themselves. So long as men are liable to differ in opinion on points which are not susceptible of compromise, there must be different denominations;—of course, separate churches and tokens of church fellowship. These may be separate and distinct; and yet Christian fellowship, enlarged and cordial, may be maintained. Good men may be loved, without loving what are deemed to be their errors. And, it is surely contrary to the spirit of Christ to be willing that people should remain unconverted, rather than be joined to those "who hold the head,"—though they differ from us. Mark 9.38–42.

2. The duty of a church member to partake of the Lord's supper, when presented in his church, depends on the obligations of Christians to their Lord,—not on the question whether we have actual fellowship with all who share in the privilege of church-membership. Whoever may be in error, the command of Christ loses none of its pungency and binding force; "do this, *in remembrance of me*." Luke 22.19, 1 Cor. 11.24: "as oft as ye do it, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come." 1 Cor. 11.26. It rests on the same basis as the duty of making a public profession of religion, Rom. 13.14, Gal. 3.27; a duty so important that surrounding apostasy only makes it the more necessary. The evil of any principle is very fairly and most distinctly seen by supposing it to become general; and, as the general neglect of "putting on Christ" would annihilate the visible church of the Redeemer,—so the principle assumed when church-members thus abstain from the sacred supper might become general, and would abolish that ordinance altogether.

3. Fellowship, in any proper or practical sense, does not make a church-member answerable for all that one of the fraternity may do. If the member has done his own duty to the offending or erring party—to reclaim him, or to exercise a wholesome discipline,—God does not, and man cannot *justly*, hold him guilty, or in any sense a partaker in the other's sin; even though the error be not reformed, and the case be such that discipline cannot be made to bear upon it.

To be wounded or grieved, to feel serious disapprobation, is a different state of mind from want of fellowship; even as it is possible for a brother to do wrong sometimes, and yet be a Christian. The Head of the Church was *without sin*. But, if any of the members, collectively or individually, have attained to that standard of purity, we have yet to learn when, or where. If fellowship, and what is technically called "full fellowship," may not survive the knowledge of each other's imperfections, we cannot see that, among well-informed persons, it can exist at all.

4. Individual actual fellowship, so far as it is practicable, ought to be formed among the

members of a church. This can be done only by such methods of reception and of subsequent intercourse as may develop, to each reciprocally, the gracious principle.

Fellowship in a church should be preserved with the greatest care,—with all purity, forbearance, tenderness and affection. 1 John 1.7. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The influence and power of the church—its growth in numbers depend upon it. John 13.35, Acts 2.46, 47. Individual edification and growth, also, depend upon it. From their common union to Christ and love of him, they share all spiritual gifts by a holy intercommunion; and, speaking the truth in love, they grow up in all things into him which is the Head; even Christ, from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. Eph. 4.15, 16. Brotherly love is the great central feeling which animates and sustains the harmonies of Christian intercourse. With this inspiring principle, guided on the one hand by common views of mutual sympathies, and by pity and *courtesy* on the other, Christians are well provided to maintain the "fellowship of the spirit." "Be ye all of one mind; having compassion one of another; *love as brethren;* be pitiful, be *courteous.* 1 Pet. 3.8.

"Finally, brethren, farewell; be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." 2 Cor. 13.11.

DAY OF FASTING, HUMILIATION AND PRAYER.

Friday before the second Sabbath in April, 1851, is the time recommended to the churches for a day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer. (See report of Select Committee, pages 5 and 6 of these minutes.)

ABSTRACT OF THE REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON DESTITUTION.

The committee on destitution, finding that there was no probability of procuring the services of more than one minister, thought it best to engage his whole time for a year. Accordingly, bro. Willis Burns, under appointment of the committee, entered on his labors on the first of January, for the year. He was requested by the committee to devote his attention about equally on both sides of the river, to seek out destitute neighborhoods and establish preaching places; also to help feeble and destitute churches as far as he might be able, and attend protracted meetings, at discretion.

The committee have reason to conclude, from various sources of information, that his labors have been faithful and acceptable; and, so far as they are able to form an opinion, judiciously bestowed. The church at New Hope, it is thought by her delegate to the Association, has been preserved from extinction by his means. Various occurrences of interest, reported to the committee and by them to the Association, show that his labors have not been in vain in the Lord; but the publication of them is deemed more appropriate to the columns of a weekly paper than the pages of the minutes. As the sum of his labors, up to the commencement of the meeting of the Association, he reports 178 sermons, 25 exhortations, 5 temperance addresses, 30 prayer meetings. He has also heard 20 experiences, baptized 12 persons, received 11 by letter, organized 2 Sunday Schools, sold 38 Bibles and given away 10, sold 53 Testaments and given away 7, sold 611 volumes and given away 195, sold 1876 pages of tracts and given 5446 pages. Of visits to families, conversing particularly with the members and praying, he has made 325. He will continue his labors, under the original appointment, till the close of 1850.

M. D. J. SLADE, Treasurer, in account with the Tuscaloosa Association Committee on Destitution.

1849.	Sept.	By amount in my hands at date, as Treasurer		$194 58
1850.	Mar. 26.	Cr. by cash paid bro. Walters, (per order of com.)	$16 25	
	" " "	" " " Burns, " " "	50 00	
	Sept. 5.	" " " " Burns, " " "	50 00	
"		" " " " Burns, " " "	3 05	
"		To amount of printing circulars and 300 cards,	8 00	
				127 25
		Balance in my hands,		$67 33

CONTRIBUTIONS ON CARDS FOR VARIOUS OBJECTS.

Churches..	*Collectors.*	*Tusc'a Dom. Miss'n*	*Home Miss'n.*	*Indian Mission.*	*For'gn Miss'n.*	*Howard College*	*Min'l support*
Tuskaloosa church,	Mrs. Slade's card, ...	$5 00	....	$19 70	....	....	$2
do do	Mrs. Powell's "	42 00	$11	37 50	....	....	19
Siloam do	N. D. Vernon's "	6 40	....	1 00	...	....	....
Mt. Tabor do	L. Watson's "	50	....	.....	....	....	....
do do do	James Ward's "	5 85	....	.....	....	....	....
Dunn's Creek do	O. Mayfield's "	5 00	....	.....	....	....	....
Spring Hill do	W. T. Poe's "	6 50	$2	1 00	....	....	....
do do do	B. Nall, "	4 75	$1	3 50	1 00	1 00	...
Hebron do	M. T. Crossland's "	3 50	....	.....	....	....	....
Concord do	A. F. Bell's "	1 00	....	1 00	1 00	....	....
do do	E. Melton's "	1 00	....	1 00	....	....	....
Cedar Grove do	Peter M. Cobb's "	3 50	....	.....	....	....	....
Big Hurricane do	L. Pumphrey's "	2 00	....	.....	....	....	....
Friendship do	A. D. Carraway's "	2 75	....	1 00	....	....	....
Bethel do	Miss Terrell's "	2 00	....	2 00	....	....	....
Philadelphia do	Calloway Gay's "	6 10	....	.....	3 10	....	....
do do	G. Hassell's "	2 70	....	50	1 50	....	....
Mt. Tabor (P.) do	Jacob Fox's "	11 35	....	50	....	....	....
do do do do	David Stokes's "	4 00	....	3 00	....	....	....
Shultz' Creek do	James Camp's "	1 50	....	.....	....	....	....
Chapel Hill do	John Brown's "	.....	....	2 50	1 00	....	....
Salem do	John Thomas's "	7 00	....	1 00	....	1 00	....
Hephzibah do	James Ray's "	1 75	....	1 25	....	....	....
do do	Elisha McMath's "	3 50	....	.....	....	....	....
Bethabara do	C. Montgomery's "	2 00	....	.....	....	....	....
Mt. Moriah do	Goodson & Shuttleworth's	10 00	....	2 25	....	....	....
Mt. Lebanon do	Enoch Dodson's "	8 60	....	.....	15	....	....
Big Creek do	John Bell's "	5 75	....	1 00	....	....	....
do do do	Wiley Skelton's "	1 00	....	.....	....	....	....
Gilgal do	S. W. Eddins's "	14 00	....	2 55	1 00	....	....
Hopewell do	Stephen Miller's "	5 00	....	.....	....	....	....
	J. McGuire,.....	50	....	.....	....	....	....
	A friend, ...	60	....	.....	....	....	....
		177 10	$14	$81 95	8 75	2 00	$21

☞ In addition to the above, on W. T. Poe's card, was $1 for Southern Publication Society. On Mrs. Slade's card, $54 for Tract Society, which latter sum has been paid to the agent of that Society.

The cards to Dr. McMath, Drury Allen, Jolly Jones, G. B. Walker, W. S. Meek, S. W. Quarles, E. Wright, J. S. Reynolds, J. W. Bealle, D. Riley, R. Pounds, Judge McConnell, Caleb Willingham, Rebecca Woodward and Daniel Hughes have not been returned.

The cards to Henry Hodnett, Jas. H. Oswald, John Brown, sen., E. B. Mayfield, Samuel Tubbs, sen., B. S. Thompson, James Harrold and Hiram White were returned.

NOTE.—Of the Indian Mission fund, $56 50 has been paid to the agent, bro. Davis, and $15 70 of which was contributed by the scholars of the Tuskaloosa Baptist Sabbath School. There is now in my hands of the Indian Mission fund $25 45, which I shall take to the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

RECAPITULATION.—Cash in my hands for Tuskaloosa Domestic Mission, as above, $177 10—which, with balance of last year $67 33, makes $244 43.

Cash in my hands for Baptist Convention—for Home Missions, 14—Indian Mission, $25 45—Ministerial support (Education) $21—Foreign Missions, $8 75—Howard College, $2—Southern Pub. Society, $1. Total, $72 20. Also, $42 55 subscribed at the Association for Ministerial Education.

M. D. J. SLADE, Clerk and Treasurer.